



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENLISTED RECORDS AND EVALUATION CENTER
8899 EAST 56TH STREET
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46249-5301



AHRC-EB

23 November 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR Director of Military Personnel Policy, Office of the Deputy Chief
of Staff G-1, 300 Army Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20310-0300

SUBJECT: Field After Action Report - FY05 SFC Selection Board

1. References.

- a. DAPE-MPE-PD, Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) dated 2 November 2004,
Subject: MOI for the FY05 SFC Selection Board.
- b. U.S. Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC) FY05 SFC Selection
Board Standard Operating Procedures effective 2 November 2004.

2. General. The CY05 SFC Selection Board convened at U. S. Army EREC,
Indianapolis, Indiana on 2 November 2004 to select the best-qualified
noncommissioned officers for promotion to Sergeant First Class IAW references 1a and
1b above. The board also screened packets of Soldiers referred to it under the Stand-
By Advisory Board (STAB) process.

3. Board issues and observations:

a. NCO Management.

(1) Titles on NCOERs did not always reflect valid MTOE/TDA positions and were
not always supported by the information recorded in the daily duty and scope
description. Occasionally Staff Sergeants were assigned below grade for one year or
more. Rating chain officials should ensure that their subordinate NCOs are slotted in
positions commensurate with their rank, or if they display exceptional potential, one
grade higher.

(2) NCOs should work in CMF specific positions first before being detailed to duty
outside his/her career field. Soldiers serving in demanding/high risk/leadership
positions did not always have an NCOER evaluating their performance. NCOs and
rating chain officials should educate themselves on the different types of evaluation
reports available and use complete the record or senior rater option reports when
appropriate to provide the board members with a clear and timely evaluation of Staff
Sergeants who are doing the tough jobs.

b. NCOER Bullet Comments.

(1) The board observed many "Excellence" ratings that were not justified by the bullet comments. Additionally, academic achievement at NCOES and Functional Courses were used to justify "Excellence," which is not allowed by policy. Rating chain officials need to ensure that "Excellence" ratings are fully supported by strong bullet comments using the observable, measurable, and quantifiable criterion within their purview. Policy prohibits mentioning academic achievements in NCOES and Functional Courses on NCOERs. Those achievements are already recorded on the AER.

(2) Bullet comments for "Needs Improvement" ratings were incomplete or unclear. Bullet comments should address the specific nature of the event warranting the "Needs Improvement" rating.

(3) APFT bullet comments had scores of 270 and above but contained no mention of the Army Physical Fitness Badge. Recommend raters clearly state whether or not the soldier earned the badge.

(4) Although actual UCMJ actions taken against a Soldier cannot be mentioned in the NCOER, raters have the option of annotating the event requiring UCMJ on the NCOER. Use of this option is encouraged to connect events during a rating period.

(5) Some consecutive NCOERs contained the exact same bullet comments. Rating officials should review previous reports to ensure that duplication of bullet comments does not occur.

(6) Some reports contained bullet comments in a different type font than the rest of the report. Usually these comments were of a derogatory nature and it could not be validated whether these changes occurred before or after the rated NCO signed the report. Recommend more command emphasis be placed on ensuring NCOERs are prepared and processed accurately and IAW appropriate regulations.

c. NCOER Overall Performance and Potential.

(1) In some cases senior raters are addressing only achievements instead of performance and promotion potential in their comments. Recommend senior raters state promotion potential first, then address performance achievements.

(2) Senior rater potential comments did not always match the block checked in part Vd. For instance some senior raters wrote "Promote now" and checked a 2 or 3 block. Promote now is a commonly accepted term meaning "Among the Best" and should be a 1 block. Recommend senior raters review paragraph 3-13 of AR 623-205 for guidance on performance and potential ratings.

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d. Validations of ERBs and Records Review. It was obvious, based on letters to the Board President, that many NCOs waited until the last minute to update their files. Files update should be an ongoing process. Soldiers should not wait until they are in the zone of consideration to review and update their records.

(1) ERBs contained critical data needed to evaluate promotion potential. Numerous inconsistencies existed between NCOERs, DA Photographs, the ERB, and the OMPF that were difficult to decipher. The following items need attention and correction during ERB validation or as events occur.

(a) Time in duty position in part IX of Assignment History on the ERB does not match up with rated duty position on NCOERs.

(b) ERBs were not updated and in many cases were missing information. Awards and decorations data was not reliable. There were additional awards on the Soldier's OMPF not listed on the ERB.

(c) Civilian college credits and Army Correspondence Course hours did not match between the ERB and the transcripts posted on the OMPF.

(2) Soldiers' comments on the online ERB validation screen indicate that numerous attempts were made to correct their records without success. Trends indicate that it is difficult to update the ERB through the personnel system. Recommend soldiers be afforded more access to the ERB to make corrections expeditiously. Recommend more system training for both the Personnel Support Battalions and the unit S1 sections to better assist soldiers in updating their records.

d. Photographs.

(1) Staff Sergeants are not spending enough time preparing their uniforms for the official photograph. Numerous discrepancies were noted to include improperly placed special skills badges, awards missing or worn incorrectly, unauthorized name plates, jewelry that did not conform to published standards, improper grooming (make-up, finger nail length, excessive lipstick), and overall fit of uniforms. Recommend Soldiers review the standards published in AR 670-1 for proper grooming, uniform fit, placement of accoutrements, and that they receive an inspection from their first line supervisor prior to having their photograph taken.

(2) Soldiers need to update their photographs on a periodic basis as needed to reflect the awards data on their ERB. Many records contained a poor quality photograph or no photograph at all. Some Soldiers could not take photographs because of deployments so the lack of an official photograph in this case was viewed neutrally. Soldiers not currently deployed lacked an excuse for not having a photograph on file. As a minimum, Soldiers should take a photo upon promotion to SSG and if possible, prior to deployments. Recommend also that first line supervisors accompany

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soldiers to DA Photograph session. Leaders should inspect the Soldier's uniform and appearance prior to the photograph and review the quality of the photograph with the Soldier prior to its placement in DAPMIS.

e. Civilian Education. Numerous Soldiers assigned to non-deployed organizations had little or no college education. In today's environment, deployment is the norm. Leaders need to encourage Soldiers to take advantage of non-deployed time and get college credits, whether through personal attendance or education online.

4. Concluding comments. The observations listed on this report should assist leaders in preparing, evaluating and assessing NCO performance and potential for evaluation by DA Centralized Promotion Boards. The NCOER remains the primary means of communicating performance and potential to DA Centralized Promotion Boards. A validated ERB and updated photograph are key supporting documents. The Army's automation initiatives which allow soldiers to validate their records via the Internet and the automated board procedure system are significant innovations in assisting board members in selecting the best qualified NCOs for promotion.



MERDITH W. B. TEMPLE
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President, FY05 SFC Selection
Board